



Position Statement

Clinical Nurse Specialist - Emergency Department

The College of Emergency Nurses New Zealand (CENNZ) NZNO is committed to the advancement of professional nursing roles and highlighting the connection between higher education for nurses and quality health care. CENNZ believes that the Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) role within the emergency setting makes a significant contribution to the health of the New Zealand community. Emergency health care has been affected by critical changes over recent years. The volume of presentations to Emergency Departments (ED) has increased to the extent that crowding, flow, and throughput have been added to the daily vocabulary of emergency nurses. In many locations, patients with complex medical conditions, or who are without primary care options present in crisis to emergency departments. Fiscal responsibility is a key function of District Health Boards. These issues have created a need for both innovative and cost effective approaches to the delivery of care.

CNSs are registered nurses who have a broad depth of knowledge and expertise. This includes advanced education at postgraduate level, specialising in an emergency care.

The CNS role reflects and demonstrates the characteristics and competencies of advanced nursing practice. As an advanced nursing role working within the Registered Nurse scope of practice CNSs bring value to clients and to the health care team both in improving patient safety and in promoting positive health outcomes.

CNSs contribute to the development of nursing knowledge using evidence based practice. They are uniquely prepared to develop and apply theory, conduct research, educate health care providers and consumers, and develop standards of practice that contribute to optimal patient outcomes. The CNS advances the practice of nursing by designing innovative evidence based interventions, influencing the practice of other nurses, and the healthcare system environment to support autonomous nursing practice.

CNSs are care providers performing comprehensive health assessments. They work alongside clients and colleagues as part of the multi disciplinary team. Their role includes assessment, developing differential diagnoses, ordering and interpreting diagnostic tests, planning and providing treatments in order to manage the health of individual patients.

CNSs have a depth of knowledge, skills, critical thinking, advanced judgment, leadership, and clinical expertise in emergency nursing. These assist in providing solutions for health care issues and advancing the nursing profession through promoting excellence in clinical practice.

CNSs provide clinical leadership. They are role models to others; educators; consultants; mentors; researchers; change agents and leaders in the pursuit of clinical excellence.

The CNS in the emergency setting has a key focus on the provision of specialist nursing care through improving and enhancing nursing practice.

CENNZ POSITION

It is the position of the College of Emergency Nurses - NZNO that Clinical Nurse Specialists:

- Practice using the principles of the competencies/scope for Registered Nurses as defined by the Nursing Council of New Zealand.
- Demonstrate a broad knowledge of legislation and principles that govern practice.
- Have postgraduate nursing education that includes advanced assessment.
- Practice at an advanced level in an emergency environment and use their abilities, knowledge, and specialised skills to meet the emergency care needs of patients, their families and significant others.
- Provide coaching, mentoring and educational opportunities for members of the multi-disciplinary team.
- Use current evidence to guide practice.
- Work with clinical and professional support including clinical supervision, mentoring and ongoing education.